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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

KITES

High on the telephone wires, the paltry pitiful thing
Hangs in rags and tatters and loops of string.
A slight breeze shakes it, but cannot shake it down.
It flutters and flutters forgotten above the town.

I hate a stranded kite,
Picked to the bones where the wind has claws that tear
And the rain has teeth that bite.
A child's is a great despair!

Such a lot of paste
And twine it took, and wrapping or daily paper,
And twists for its tail, lest it cut too great a caper
Up in the cumulous, out in the bellying, buoying air. . . .
Now it hangs there!

My dreams are gorgeous kites like the kites Chinese.
I can feel them tug and yank at my brain, in a breeze,
Shaped like serpent-dragons and whiskered tigers and other
eccentric glories,
Such as knights and goblins and beasts out of fairy stories;
Hung with golden tinsel, and silver, and bright red fire-
cracker paper,
Each jumper and twister and japer
That cuts its frolic caper
High in the buoyant blue.
And, high as I fly them, I stand a gaper
At other kites. Do you?

Kites

My kites are great gilt angels in garments of blue,
With white-feathered wings I scalloped from song-book
pages.

They dip and romp
In happy pomp
High over the tossing trees, and the houses too;
And afloat through the silver of night they fling bright gages
At the hornèd stars with their luminous, twinkling graces.
They sway on the traces
Of comets, and nudge the moon, and smile all the while
The same untiring and ineffable smile . . .
Is it painted upon their faces?

My kites are huge like elephants, small like mice.
I fly them all in a flock, in spite of advice—
The best advice!
They go up in rainbow brilliance and snow-white storms,
In all shapes and forms.

Well, here's their memento! here's the superb ideal
Clutched by the real!
That frail little skeleton flutters between the wires
Till the eyesight tires. . . .

I turn to go—
Somewhat dashed, somewhat dashed, you know!
But regard that bright
Bulge of gold-lit glory that soars o'er those roofs, so white!
Get a golden cord! I must have that cloud for a kite!

William Rose Benét